



Representative Lamar Wise
Oregon House District 48

HB 4132 - \$10M to Veterans Affairs

House Emergency Management | February 5th 2026

Chair and Members of the Committee, my name is Representative Lamar Wise, and I proudly represent House District 48, serving Southeast Portland and North Clackamas County. I strongly support House Bill 4132, the 2026 Oregon Veterans' Services Supplemental Investments Initiative.

HB 4132 represents a comprehensive and overdue commitment to Oregon's veterans, one that recognizes that honoring service requires more than gratitude. It requires sustained investment, thoughtful coordination, and systems that meet veterans where they are.

At its core, this bill strengthens the capacity of the Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs to deliver services that are responsive, equitable, and effective. By establishing a long-term funding goal and adding essential staff positions, including coordinators for houseless veterans, incarcerated veterans, women veterans, LGBTQIA2S+ veterans, and behavioral health, HB 4132 acknowledges a simple truth: veterans are not a monolith, and our systems must reflect the diversity of their experiences and needs.

This legislation also makes critical workforce investments. The creation of a Veterans Employment Coordinator and the expansion of workforce training and preparation efforts ensure that veterans transitioning out of service are supported in finding meaningful employment and long-term stability. Pairing workforce preparation with suicide prevention grants is especially important. Employment, purpose, and community connection are powerful protective factors, and HB 4132 wisely integrates these strategies rather than treating them in isolation.

HB 4132 further strengthens accountability and access by improving the distribution process for county veterans' service officer funding, expanding eligibility and increasing the cap for the Veteran Educational Bridge Grant Program, and protecting sensitive veteran discharge records. These changes reduce barriers, improve transparency, and help veterans access benefits without unnecessary delay or risk.

Finally, the bill takes a forward-looking approach by studying statewide access to veterans' treatment courts and responsibly directing unexpended funds into the Veterans' Services Fund, ensuring resources remain dedicated to veteran services while maximizing their impact.

In House District 48 and across Oregon, veterans and their families contribute deeply to our communities. They deserve a system that is adequately funded, well-staffed, and designed with their realities in mind. HB 4132 does exactly that.

I urge the committee to support House Bill 4132 and move this important legislation forward. Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Oregon's veterans. Thank you.